

UNDERGRADUATE CURRICULUM PROPOSAL COVER SHEET

JAN 07 2009

Title of Proposal – Must begin with Department Abbreviation:

SOC 320: Proposal for New Course - Sociology of Education (339)

REGISTRATION

Check One: Full Proposal or Information Item

Effective Date for Curricular Offering: Fall 2010 2009

FROM: Lorraine Evans, Sociology, Anthropology & Geography Brock Hall 308A 425-2374 lorraine-evans@utc.edu
 (proposal originator: include spokesperson's name, department, office number, telephone, e-mail)

Does this require new resources from the originating department or other department? None
 Please attach explanation if yes.

Faculty of the originating department approved this proposal on Dec 5, 2008 (date),
 by a vote of 7 aye votes; 0 nay votes; 0 abstentions; 1 eligible voting members absent

The following have examined this proposal:

Dept Head/Director: Zibin Guo [Signature] approve neutral disapprove*
 (printed name) signature

College Curriculum Committee Date: _____ Vote: _____ Signature of Chair: _____

Spokespersons for Affected Departments:

Valerie C. Rutledge [Signature] approve neutral disapprove*
Valerie C. Rutledge, JPA, 2-12-09
 (name, department, date) signature

 (name, department, date) signature approve neutral disapprove*

 (name, department, date) signature approve neutral disapprove*

 (name, department, date) signature approve neutral disapprove*

Dean/Director: H. Burkham [Signature] approve neutral disapprove*
 signature

University Registrar: Linda Orth [Signature] Comments: _____
 (printed name) signature

Phil Oldham [Signature] approve neutral disapprove*
1-20-09 (printed name) signature

*Those who disapprove may attach an explanation

ACTIONS on this proposal:	Curriculum Committee	Faculty Senate
Date the proposal was considered	_____	_____
Vote of the body:	_____	_____
Accepted as information item (indicate date)	_____	_____
Approved as submitted (indicate date)	_____	_____
Approved with amendments (amendments indicated and transmitted to all signatories above, date):	_____	_____
Signature of Chair:	_____	_____

To: UTC Faculty Senate
From: Dr. Lorraine Evans, Department of Sociology, Anthropology, and Geography
Date: September 18, 2008

Subject: Proposal for New Course: Sociology 339 (3 credit hours).

Proposed Title: Sociology of Education

Catalog Description:

This course focuses on the structure of the education system and culture of schools in the United States. Specifically students examine the functions and purpose of schooling; stratification in education; schools as organizations; teachers and teaching; students; education policy and reform; and the application of sociological concepts in the local context. Prerequisites: Any general education Behavioral and Social Science course or approval of the instructor.

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Rationale:

Education has an impact on all forms of social life and on all groups of people, and consequently, analyzing the schooling of citizens in our society is a topic worthy of study. A critical investigation of the American education system through a sociological lens generates a structural perspective of schooling that facilitates analysis of both personal problems and public issues within education. Students, consequently, gain a knowledge base that provides a platform to critically examine the social forces evident in the social structure, such as the effects of stratification and the development of public policy. These skills can be extrapolated to other areas of social life and academic disciplines to help students navigate the complexities of modern society.

Impact on the Department of Sociology, Anthropology, and Geography:

Currently, the department does not offer any courses that examine education from a sociological perspective. The addition of this course will be a valuable addition to the development of the applied objectives of the course.

Impact on Other Departments:

Investigating the education system will be of interest to many students at UTC, particularly students focusing on public institutions, such as education and teaching, social work and human services, criminal justice, public administration and political science. It will require no additional resources and will require no changes in the major or minor programs of any other department.

Syllabus: See Attachment.

Method of Student Evaluation:

Students are evaluated through a combination of exams and assignments including multiple choice, research projects, and reflective papers. Participation, an integral aspect to learning, will be monitored through debates and in-class activities (10%). The first exam addresses foundational concepts and theories (20%) and exam two covers the social organizations of schools (20%). As part of an applied approach to learning, students actively engage in the subject through analyzing local school systems with sociological concepts. Graded activities include a group analysis of a local school district and a presentation of their findings (30%). Each student concludes the course with a reflective essay examining one education issue raised in their research project in greater depth (20%).

GRADING

Grading Breakdown:		Grading Scale:	
Exam 1	20%	90-100%	A
Exam 2	20%	80-89%	B
School district project	30%	70-79%	C
Final paper	20%	60-69%	D
Participation/debates	10%	00-59%	F
Total	100%		

SOC339: Sociology of Education

Instructor: Dr. Evans
Classroom:
Office hours:
Phone: 423-2374
Email: lorraine-evans@utc.edu

Course Objectives

The overall framework emphasizes the history, theory, and practice of education of the K-12 schooling system in the United States. Through readings, discussion, and lecture I will introduce you to sociological theories and research directly addressing schools in American society.

There are three objectives for this course:

1. To provide an introduction to the sociological perspectives on historical and current education issues.
2. To help you understand the dynamics and interaction between society and schools.
3. To encourage the development of an informed perspective on education through applying the material we read and discuss in class to the education arena in the state of Tennessee.

Most of our time will be spent in discussion or structured activities including debates. I expect that all of you will participate in class discussion. Your participation in the class is imperative for understanding course concepts and readings. Education and schools are not unfamiliar topics to any of us – what you have to add to the class discussions is valuable and important. In sum, read, prepare, and discuss!

Preparation

This course is based on readings that are available on blackboard or in online databases such as Web of Science or JSTOR. You are expected to download and read all course material by the assigned class period.

Grading

Grading for the course includes participation in the debate issues over the semester; two exams; a group research project with a presentation and a final reflective essay. I will hand out details for the research project after the first exam and the reflective paper will be completed as the final exam. The points for each assignment reflect the weight of the project in the overall course.

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Total	100%		

Introduction and the historical perspective: Theory, functions and processes of education

Week 1

Parsons, Talcott. 2001. "The School Class as a Social System" In Joan Ballantine & Joan Spade (Eds.) *Schools and Society: A Sociological Approach to Education*. 38-46. Belmont, CA: Wadsworth.

Gracey, Harry L. 2001. "Learning the Student Role: Kindergarten as Academic Boot Camp" In Joan Ballantine & Joan Spade (Eds.) *Schools and Society: A Sociological Approach to Education*. 95-99. Belmont, CA: Wadsworth.

Durkheim, E. [1925] 1961. "The Discipline of the School" In *Moral Education*, 144-157. Glencoe, IL: Free Press.

Week 2

Ballantine, Jeanne. 2001. *The Sociology of Education*. 27-59. Prentice Hall: New Jersey

Bowles, S. & H. Gintis. 2001. "Schooling in Capitalist Societies." In Joan Ballantine & Joan Spade (Eds.) *Schools and Society: A Sociological Approach to Education*. 58-61. Belmont, CA: Wadsworth.

Alexander, Karl. 1997. "Public Schools and the Public Good." *Social Forces* 76: 1-30. (EBSCO or JSTOR)

Debate the issue: what is the role of schooling in modern society?

Begin group project

Social Structure and Stratification

Week 3 Social class and economics

Weglinsky, Harold. 2001. "How Money Matters." In Joan Ballantine & Joan Spade (Eds.) *Schools and Society: A Sociological Approach to Education*. 197-203. Belmont, CA: Wadsworth.

Cookson, Peter & Caroline Persell. 2001. "Preparing for Power: Americas Elite Boarding Schools ." In Joan Ballantine & Joan Spade (Eds.) *Schools and Society: A Sociological Approach to Education*. 252-258. Belmont, CA: Wadsworth.

Kozol, J. 1992. "Life on the Mississippi: East St. Louis." *Savage Inequalities*, 7-39. New York NY: Crown Publishing.

Week 4 Race and ethnicity

Assignment #1 due in class

Orfield, Gary et al. 2003. "The Resurgence of School Segregation." *Educational Leadership*. January: 16-20.

Coleman, James. 2001. "The Concept of Equality of Educational Opportunity." 231-239. In Joan Ballantine & Joan Spade (Eds.) *Schools and Society: A Sociological Approach to Education*. Belmont, CA: Wadsworth.

Henig, Jeffery et al. 1999. "School Reform as if Politics and Race Matter" 273-292. *The Color of School Reform*. Princeton: Princeton University Press.

Archbald, Doug. 1996. "SES and Demographic Predictors of Magnet School Enrollment." *Journal of Research & Development*. 29:152-161.

Debate the issue: Should the curriculum be standardized for all?

Week 5 Gender and schooling

Noguera, Pedro. 1996. Responding to the Crisis Confronting California's Black Male Youth." *Journal of Negro Education*. 65: 219-236. (JSTOR)

Evans, Lorraine & Kim Davies. 2000. "No Sissy Boys Here" *Sex Roles*. 42:255-270. (web of science)

Week 6 EXAM 1

Group projects

The Education System

Week 7 Schools as organizations

Meyer, John W. & Brian Rowen. 2001. "The Structure of Educational Organizations." 77-87. In Joan Ballantine & Joan Spade (Eds.) *Schools and Society: A Sociological Approach to Education*. Belmont, CA: Wadsworth.

Barr, Rebecca & Robert Dreeben. 2001. "How Schools Work" 88-94. In Joan Ballantine & Joan Spade (Eds.) *Schools and Society: A Sociological Approach to Education*. Belmont, CA: Wadsworth.

Weick, Karl E. 1976 "Educational Organizations as Loosely Coupled Systems" *Administrative Science Quarterly* 21:1-19. (JSTOR)

Week 8 The teaching workforce

Assignment #2 due in class

Clifford, Geraldine & James Guthrie. 1988. "Education, Educators, and Education Schools" 3-43. In *Ed School: A Brief for Professional Education*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press.

Ingersoll, Richard. 1996. "Teachers decision-making power and school conflict." *Sociology of Education*. 69:159-181. (JSTOR)

Debate the issue: Alternative certification for teachers

Week 9 Students and schools

Ballantine, Jeanne. 2001. *The Sociology of Education*. 186-222. Prentice Hall: New Jersey

Week 10 Politics and policy: magnet schools, charter schools and vouchers

Ballantine, Jeanne. 2001. *The Sociology of Education*. 373-396. Prentice Hall: New Jersey

Connell, R.W. 2001. "Poverty and Education " 469-477. In Joan Ballantine & Joan Spade (Eds.) *Schools and Society: A Sociological Approach to Education*. Belmont, CA: Wadsworth.

Renzulli, Linda, and Lorraine Evans. 2005 "School Choice, Charter Schools and White Flight" *Social Problems* 52: 398- 418.

Debate the issue: school choice

Week 11 EXAM 2

Assignment #3 due in class

Debate the issue: Do high stake assessments improve learning?

Week 12 Group presentation preparation

Bring your article summaries, district report cards and media portrayals to class

Week 13 and 14 – Group presentations

All group presentation outlines due at the beginning of class

Week 15 Public Policy – No Child Left Behind

No Child Left Behind Policy

Debate the issue: Are American schools failing?

Final exam

Schools and Society: Group presentation and individual research paper

The goal of this research project is to describe, analyze, and present a sociological perspective on a school district in the state of Tennessee. The project requires the completion of three assignments over the course of the investigation and culminates in a class presentation and a research report. The group will gather and present material but the final reflection paper is to be prepared individually.

For this project you will need to coordinate with your group and prepare both a one page brochure and 20 minute presentation for the class. When you are collecting the information remember this is a sociology class. This is not just a presentation of facts but a chance for you to analyze a Tennessee school district with a sociological lens, paying particular attention to one or two critical issues. The focus of your investigation is to be drawn from the topics we cover over the course, for instance: race and re/de/segregation; economics, funding and social class; gender and sports; school choice; the organization of schools; violence and poverty; school catchment areas and zoning; standardized testing, and; the role of teachers. Identify the biggest problem for the district according to your group, and suggest a policy that might correct the situation.

This is a semester long project with group members collecting data over a 10 week period. The material is to be synthesized and the main issues highlighted.

For your information look at

- NCES
- The school district websites
- Tennessee Department of Education
- Local newspapers
- School websites
- PTA web site
- Wherever else you can think of!

Research assignment #1: Select a school district

Due in class the beginning of week 4

As a group you must decide what district to investigate for your research project. At this stage you should gather the school district reports available online and look at individual school websites. This is what the data reveals in the initial exploration and it provides the foundation for the research focus.

Write up a short report outlining the basics, such as

The demographics of the district – race/ethnicity; gender; free/subsidized lunches etc.

How many schools and at what levels

Failing schools – level and ses

Test scores – how many passing/failing at different grades and overall picture

Schools of choice available

Drop out rates and retained students [gender?]

Conclude with the two or three topics your group is interesting in pursuing in more depth.

Research assignment #2: media portrayal and public understandings

Due in class in week 7

Surf the web to find out what the mass media and popular press are saying about your school district, with a focus on the issues your group is investigating.

Each member of the group should uncover at least three (3) newspaper articles or television news report directly related to your topic. The latter are more likely to influence public understandings of the issue.

What are identified as the causes and effects?

Is the topic portrayed as an individual problems or structural issue?

Do race and/or social class play into the discussion? If so, how?

What about policy? How do the media suggest the problem should be solved?

Are there any other suggestions to solve the problem?

Each group member should write summary of their findings and disseminate them to other group members. Turn one copy of summary to me.

Research assignment # 3: Peer reviewed articles

Due in class in week 11

Each member of the group needs to find four (4) *peer reviewed* articles on the school issue the group is investigating. The article does not have to directly address the specific school district but the issue the group is investigating in the district.

Peer reviewed articles are available on EBSCOhost or JSTOR or other electronic databases as well as in hardcopy in the library. For each of the articles write a one-page, single spaced, summary highlighting the main points and identifying the information relevant to your research question specifically. Do not turn in the abstract or print out of the abstract. The summary should identify

1. The article title, author, date of publication and journal name
2. The research question
3. The research design (brief – population, numbers, method)
4. How the article contributes to the understanding of your problem and policy. I am looking for specific information that you found important. Does it challenge the media representation/public understanding? Is it politically charged? Does the research answer a good question or does it reinforce beliefs?

Each member should provide the other group members with the summaries.

Presentation

Your final presentation should teach the class about the school district and the particular problems embedded in the schools as identified by the group.

All groups will turn in an outline of their presentation the week before presentations begin. Failure to do so results in a 50% penalty of the final presentation grade for all group members, with an additional 10% deduction for every day late.

Clearly identify and describe the school and the issues.

Analyze and discuss the problem from a sociological perspective.

Present an alternative option/policy that the group believes could minimize or even solve the education issue.

Your final presentation can include a poster, a brochure, a video, a t.v. show, or another visual medium illustrating the social problem/policy. You can include a class activity.

The presentation is your group leading discussion and educating the class on the topic. Address the heart of your issue, as defined by both the popular press and the academic research. You should identify the key contributing factors to the problem and be prepared to explain your subject matter. Be bold, be creative and **be sociological!**

As part of the presentation each group will develop a quiz to administer to the class after the presentation and discussion. The quiz will consist of FIVE (5) multiple choice questions and the results of the quiz will be entered as the participation grade for students.

The group will turn in a copy of the presentation (an outline of how the group intends to proceed and the materials to be covered) and quiz the questions and answers to me before any presentations take place.

Final paper

Your final paper should pull all your research together. It should be typed, double spaced and between 5-8 pages. The goal of the paper is to present a sociological, analytical perspective of the school district and the education issue based on the material gathered. The substance should include a discussion of the school district from a sociological perspective. You will use the data that the group has collected over the semester to write your paper and cite the material correctly.

1. Describe the school district under investigation
2. Clearly state the primary issue investigated in the school district and the sociological relevance of the issue. Why do you think it is an important issue?
3. Reflect on the relationship between public knowledge (generated through the media) and empirical reality of the topic.
4. Conclude with a critical assessment of the attempts to address the problem, if any, and how the situation can be improved. What are your thoughts?